

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Darren Rogers
Senior Director, Communications & Media Services
Churchill Downs Racetrack
(502) 636-4461 (office)
(502) 345-1030 (mobile)

VETTORI KIN WINS GRADE III, \$100,000 LOUISVILLE HANDICAP AT CHURCHILL DOWNS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Saturday, May 19, 2018) – Vettori Kin (BRZ) swept wide at the top of the stretch and rallied to grab the lead from stablemate Harlan Strong (ARG) inside the final furlong and win Saturday's 81st running of the \$100,000 Louisville Handicap (Grade III) at Churchill Downs by a widening 2 1/2 lengths.

Vettori Kin, ridden by **Julien Leparoux** for owners **Fern Circle Stables** (Paul Fireman), **Stud TNT** (Gonzalo Torrealba) and **Old Friends Inc.** (Julio Gerin de Almeida Camargio), ran 1 1/2 miles over a firm Matt Winn Turf Course in 2:30.14 to give trainer **Kenny McPeek** a one-two finish and his fifth win in the race.

Previously, McPeek won the race with **Pisces** (2002), **Drilling for Oil** (2007), **War Dancer** (2014) and **Some in Tieme** (BRZ). The latter finished fourth as the 3-2 favorite Saturday when **Bronson** hung a head on him at the wire to spoil a McPeek sweep of the top three positions.

“I’m proud of all three of my horses,” McPeek said. “I’ve tried to get (Vettori Kin) on the grass earlier this year but the races didn’t really work out. He ran well last week over the course so I’ll just call it a test run before this race. In Brazil and Argentina they have a great endurance program for their horses and I knew he would love the extra distance.”

Designed for War set the pace in the grass marathon through fractions of :24.93, :50.34, 1:15.81, 1:44.44 and 2:06.47 with Vettori Kin tracking along the inside and covered up in fifth for most of the trip. Around the third and final turn, Vettori Kin split horses as Harlan Strong took the lead from **Designed for War** and **Roman Approval** at the top of the stretch. Vettori Kin continued to close five paths off the inside hedge and drove past his stablemate in deep stretch for the comfortable victory.

The win was worth \$60,140 and improved Vettori Kin’s career earnings to \$114,368 with a record of 4-0-2 in 13 starts. It was his third graded stakes victory but first in North America. Previously, he won the Linneo de Paula Machado (GIII) and Grande Premio Derby Paulista (GI) in his native Brazil in 2016. In his first start for McPeek in 2017, Vettori Kin finished 10th of 16 in the 2017 UAE Derby (GII), which was won by **Thunder Snow** (IRE).

Saturday’s victory came just six days after Vettori Kin finished third in a 1 1/16-mile turf allowance/optional claiming race at Churchill Downs.

“He ran well last week over the course at Churchill,” Leparoux said. “We had a perfect ride and sat a great trip the entire race. When we turned for home I had a lot of horse still left underneath me and he really responded well in the stretch. Kenny did a great job getting him ready to go.”

Vettori Kin (BRZ), who carried 115 pounds, returned \$8.60, \$5.80 and \$4 as the 3-1 second betting choice in the field of eight older horses. Harlan Strong, under **Brian Hernandez Jr.** and 116 pounds, paid \$5.60 and \$4.20. Bronson, ridden by **Shaun Bridgmohan** at 116 pounds, was another 1 3/4 lengths back in third and paid \$6.

Some in Tieme (118 pounds), **Cartoon** (118), Roman Approval (118), **Cooptado (ARG)** (115) and **Designed for War** (118) completed the order of finish.

Vettori Kin, a 5-year-old son of Vettori (IRE) out of the Laramie (ARG) mare Miss Kin (BRZ), was bred in Brazil by **Haras Old Friends LTDA**.

Racing at Churchill Downs continues Sunday with a 10-race card that begins at 12:45 p.m. (all times Eastern). Sunday doubles as Family Adventure Day Presented by Kroger. The day of racing is complimented by plenty of family activities in the Plaza area including pony rides, inflatables, a petting zoo, stick horse races, face painting and more. "Play Sports!" is the theme as part of a new partnership with the Louisville Sports Commission to get kids active at the event. Sports highlights include a soccer kick and player meet-and-greet with Louisville FC; Louisville Bats mascot Buddy the Bat; tennis activity with USTA Kentucky; and boxing demonstrations.

Also, there is a seven-day carryover of \$444,974 in the 20-cent Single 6 Jackpot which covers Races 5-10 with a scheduled post time of 2:45 p.m. The final race of the day is scheduled for 5:26 p.m. and that race features a \$1 Super Hi-5 carryover of \$2,389.

LOUISVILLE HANDICAP QUOTES

Julien Leparoux, jockey of VETTORI KIN (winner): "He ran well last week over the course at Churchill. We had a perfect ride and sat a great trip the entire race. When we turned for home I had a lot of horse still left underneath me and he really responded well in the stretch. Kenny did a great job getting him ready to go."

Brian Hernandez Jr., jockey of Harlan Strong (runner-up): "We had a great trip. He relaxed very well and responded when I asked him to go but was just second best."

Kenny McPeek, trainer of VETTORI KIN (winner), HARLAN STRONG (runner-up), SOME IN TIEME (fourth): "I'm proud of all three of my horses. I've tried to get (Vettori Kin) on the grass earlier this year but the races didn't really work out. He ran well last week over the course so I'll just call it a test run before this race. In Brazil and Argentina they have a great endurance program for their horses and I knew he would love the extra distance."

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